

1871

A Field Battery Association, Inc.

National Newsletter

May 2009

2009

President Ron Bassan's Report



G'day everyone and I hope this newsletter finds most of you well.

We had the Special General Meeting on the 21st February and thank heavens we did have Quorum, we had twenty two members turn up for the meeting and I had one proxy. I sat down and re-wrote the Constitution, bringing it up to date, it took me two days but it was well worth it.

After going through the Constitution, we found some mistakes which were corrected on the spot and the Constitution was adopted unanimously with the Department of Fair Trading, Qld. The constitution of A Field Battery has now been ratified and accepted by the Justice Department.

Most people turned up the night before and Lloyd provided a Barbeque and while we were enjoying it a thunder storm hit. After the barbecue we had a few drinks and some socialising, which was very nice.

Remember, the financial year ends this year and into the future on the 30th June, not July. There are half a dozen members who have not paid their subs for 08/09. If you think you have not paid, contact me and I will soon let you know, also, someone sent the Treasurer a money order for their subs with no note or who sent it and we could not even distinguish what post office had written the money order.

Our Annual General Meeting and Reunion will be held on the 11th to 13th September, 2009, at the Maroochy River Coach House, Maroochydore. If you intend to come to the AGM, please book in early as I believe there are going to be some new faces there as well as the old. For bookings, ring 07 5448 4344, or if you want to know more, contact the Secretary.

Finally, once again I have to finish this report on a sad note. We have lost three more of our members, Jim Ponting, Brian Scott and John Downes.

That's enough waffle from me for this edition,

Semper Paratus

Tex



**Book in now for The AGM and Reunion, a great weekend,
Friday 11th. Sept, to Sunday 13th. Sept. 2009**

MAROOCHY RIVER COACH HOUSE ★★ ★

An absolute waterfront home-style resort, superb meals, entertainment and real hospitality. This weekend is one of our best reunions, if you have never done it, make the decision now; you will not be disappointed. The Maroochy River Coach House provides 64 fully air-conditioned ensuite rooms, air-conditioned licensed restaurant and bar, function and tour services. A relaxing time with old friends in a pleasant environment.

Spacious dining room serves all home-style meals prepared fresh each day.

The resort has TV lounge, licensed bar and swimming pool.

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Fax: 07 5448 5602

Address: David Low Way Maroochydore Qld 4558.

PO Box 86 Bli Bli 4560

Anzac Day 2009 in Sydney Town

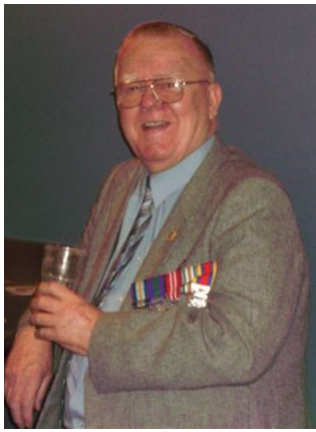
I attended the Dawn Service in Penrith then by train to the City. For a change the day was fine & we actually had a good dry march, the Battery turned up in "droves" (I think we must have had about 90% on parade).

Our old Mate Frank Berrier was on parade together with Peter & the family. Only one drawback was we had to scrounge a lift for Frank with a Infantry Land Rover, due to The Battery not able to supply one for us.

From the March we adjourned to the Coronation for Drinks etc.(which was very well catered for considering the crowd); boy can those young fellows sink the liquor I had forgotten. All in all we had a very enjoyable day.

Now for next Year.

John Smith



Bluey Hassel



**Terry Jobson and
Brian Privett**



Colin Flatters, (caught actually shouting.)

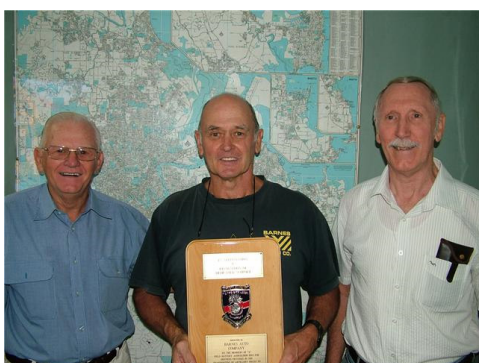
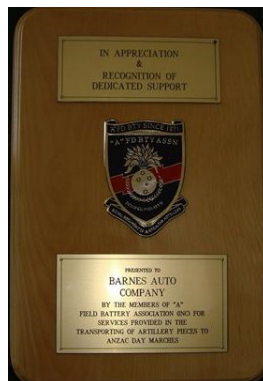


Reg Etienne, John Smith, ? and Brian Privett

The photos below are a couple taken at the Brisbane Anzac Day March and the others are of a presentation we made to Mr. John Dent of Barnes Auto for their help in looking after our guns.

The photo of Saint loading the slab of beer was shot by Arthur Burke as the Saint slipped a carton into the truck for the driver who, by the way, is the same bloke who has done the job every year.

The others are of the truck with the guns on board leaving 1st Field Regiment early morning on ANZAC Day, Don Sinclair and Bob Cunningham presenting the plaque to the manager of Barnes Auto at their office at Rocklea, and the plaque itself. The plaque is a piece a Tulip Pine from the Maleny rain forest that the very handy Saint bought and machined at home. The centre piece is the medal badge that we put on our assn. plaques.





'All in' - Indigenous service

The Australian Army and the Royal Australian Navy, excluded persons 'not substantially of European origin or descent' until the threat of Japanese invasion necessitated the recruitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The Royal Australian Air Force was more lenient, accepting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders early on because of a critical shortage of manpower due to the demands of the Empire Air Training Scheme.

Despite the early ban on their enlistment, a number of Aboriginal volunteers either claimed another nationality or just renounced their Aboriginality. Some recruiting officers either through indifference or confusion allowed Indigenous Australians to slip through. Outstanding soldiers such as Reg Saunders and Charles Mene slipped through and demonstrated that

fears of disharmony between black and white personnel were unfounded



Lieutenant L Reg Saunders, the first Aboriginal commissioned in the Australian Army being congratulated by Lieutenant Tom Derrick VC DCM after their successful graduation from the Officers Cadet Training Unit at Seymour, Victoria, 25 November 1944.

to leave the prejudices of their civilian world behind them and be accepted as Australian servicemen.

The Torres Strait Light Infantry battalion was one

example of the Indigenous contribution.

Much thought was given to the use of Indigenous manpower for the war effort. In Northern Australia, the Special Reconnaissance Unit raised in 1941 by anthropologist Flight Lieutenant Donald Thomson was formed almost exclusively of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders. Similar units were formed at Bathurst and Melville

Island, at Groote Eylandt and on the Cox Peninsula. The Aborigines who served in those units were not formally enlisted and nor were they paid. In 1992 they were finally awarded medals and remuneration.

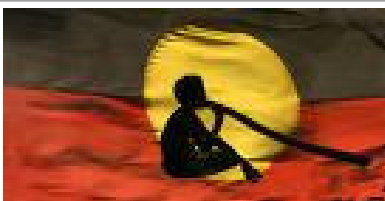
It is estimated that approximately 3000 Indigenous Australians served in the regular armed forces and possibly up to 150 in irregular units. Even now it is impossible to estimate how many Indigenous men and women enlisted to serve in World War II. Australian Defence Force enlistment forms did not allow for Aborigines to declare their heritage until 1980 and so we can only guess how many thousands volunteered for both home and overseas service.

In Katherine in the Northern Territory, Aboriginal compounds were located near the Army units and most of the men worked as labourers. They were employed in ammunition stacking, timber cutting and cement works, maintaining gardens, slaughtering cattle, and assembling and clearing gearboxes. The Army eventually employed 20 percent of the Territory's Aboriginal population. Aboriginal women were employed in domestic duties or as hospital orderlies at the 121/101 Australian General Hospital at Katherine.

Although they were not classed or treated as Australian citizens, many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander servicemen and women fought and died for Australia during World War II.



Flight Sergeant Leonard Waters, Australia's first and only Aboriginal fighter pilot during World War II, seen here in his Kittyhawk 'Black Magic'.



Australia does not have a lot to be proud of with the treatment of our indigenous servicemen.

The technical answer is because Aboriginal people weren't considered Australian citizens until the referendum of 1967, so they didn't qualify for all the benefits that comes with being an Aussie."

Hundreds of Aborigines served

in the 2nd AIF and the militia. Many were killed fighting and at least a dozen died as prisoners of war.

As in the First World War, Aborigines served under the same conditions as Whites and, in most cases, with the promise of full citizenship rights after the war.

Generally, there seems to have been little racism between soldiers, however, when they returned to Australia they were not allowed to apply for the Returned Servicemen's Settlement Scheme, nor were they permitted to have a beer along with other returned servicemen.

Many of them were not given the right to vote for another 22 years.

So, until 42 years ago, indigenous Australians were certainly fighting the wars of a country that didn't recognise them as its own

. Aborigines who fought for their country came back to much the same discrimination as before. For example, many were barred from RSL clubs, except on ANZAC Day.

This becomes more shameful when we reflect that these dogmatic laws were not changed until recently modern times; ten years after we embarked for Malaya in 1957



SANDAKAN DEATH MARCH

Approximately 455 POWs left Sandakan in different groups between January and March, 1945. By the end of June, five months later, only six of the group from this first march were still alive at Ranau.

Trying to survive with only four days rations – rice, some dried fish and salt - and burdened with Japanese equipment - sacks of rice, ammunition and other items - the men struggled through the swamp, jungle and mountain forest. Those too weak to continue were shot or beaten to death. Keith Botterill one of the six survivors from the Sandakan death marches later recalled: I've seen men shot and bayoneted to death because they could not keep up with the party. We climbed this mountain about 30 miles out from Ranau, and we lost five men on that mountain in half a day. They shot five of them because they couldn't continue. But I just kept plodding along. It was dense jungle, I was heartbroken, but I thought there was safety in numbers. I just kept going.

Many of the men had been sent on rice-carrying parties between Ranau and Paginatan, a village approximately 20 kilometres before Ranau. Men from some of the groups on the first march just wasted away there and died. Others, who couldn't complete the nine-day trips, were either shot or bayoneted to death.

No effort whatsoever was made to bury the men. They would just pull them five to fifteen yards off the track and bayonet them or shoot them, depending on the condition of the men. If they were conscious, and it was what we thought was a good, kind guard, they'd shoot them. There was nothing we could do.

Those who survived to reach Ranau were herded into insanitary and crowded huts and many died from dysentery. By 26 June, only five Australians and one British soldier were still alive.

Those POWs who had remained at Sandakan were also suffering from malnutrition and disease and between February and May, 885 Australian and British prisoners died at the camp. In May, after a large Allied sea-air bombardment of Sandakan, the Japanese evacuated the remaining ill and malnourished 800 or so prisoners and burned their camp.

Approximately 500 of those well enough to move were gathered in eleven groups for the second march to Ranau.



Three of the survivors of the Sandakan-Ranau death marches: Private Nelson Short, Warrant Officer William Sticpewich and Private Keith Botterill, North Borneo, 1945

Those too incapacitated to move were left behind in the burnt-out camp to die.

Those on the second march left Sandakan camp on 29 May 1945. These men were sicker and even more malnourished. They ate what they could find in the jungle – snails and tree ferns – and the Japanese guards beat them with their rifle butts to urge them on. Those who couldn't walk any further were shot, bayoneted or in some cases, beheaded. Only 183 of the men (142 Australian and 41 British POWs) survived to reach Ranau on 27 June, 26 days after they left Sandakan.

On 28 July, when four Australians managed to escape, there were about 40 POWs still alive at Ranau, despite the beatings, bashings and tiny rice ration they were given. In August 1945, the Japanese massacred the surviving prisoners. Evidence suggests that these last survivors were put to death on 27 August, 12 days after the official Japanese surrender.

Only six soldiers, all of them Australians, survived the Sandakan death marches:

- **Warrant Officer 'Bill' Sticpewich**, Australian Army Service Corps
- **Private Keith Botterill**, 2/19th Battalion
- **Lance Bombardier William Moxham**, 2/15th Australian Field Regiment
- **Private Nelson Short**, 2/18th Battalion
- **Gunner Owen Campbell**, 2/10th Australian Field Regiment
- **Bombardier Richard 'Dick' Braithwaite**, 2/15th Australian Field Regiment.

Without these survivors we may never have discovered the fate of more than 2000 Australian and British POWs.



Bombardier Richard 'Dick' Braithwaite, 2/15th Australian Field Regiment escaped from the second Sandakan-Ranau death march in June 1945



Lance Bombardier William 'Bill' Moxham, 2/15th Australian Field Regiment was on the first death march and escaped from Ranau in July 1945



Gunner Owen Campbell, 2/10th Australian Field Regiment escaped from the second Sandakan-Ranau death march in June 1945



*They shall not grow old,
As we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them.*

KEN. AGNEW
TOM. BANFIELD
TREVOR. BEER
S.J. BLANCH (OAS. Malaya)
GORDON CARMICHAEL
TOM. CARRUTHERS
KEITH. CHRISTENSEN
RICHARD. DUGGAN
R.M. DUCAT (OAS. Malaya)
PAT. DALY
TOM. DAWSON
JOHN. DOWNES
GEORGE. FORSYTHE
ROBERT J. (BOB) GRAY
NEIL HARDEN
MICK. HARKEN
B.D. HENDERSON (OAS. Malaya)
KEN. KENNEDY
BOBBY. LEWIS
JOHN. MACDONALD
L.G. MATHERS (KIA. Vietnam)
E.J. (LOFTY) MOORE
R.J. PARKER (OAS. Vietnam)
R.J. (JIM) PONTING
DAVE. QUIRK
PETER. RAINSBURY
CLIVE. RALFE
BRIAN. SCOTT
PETER. SEDDON
R. F. SMITH
BRIAN. WHISKER
BERNARD. (PLONKY) WINE
JOHN. WORBOYS



Their Journey's Just Begun

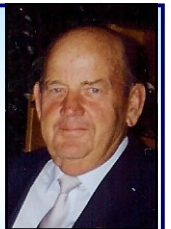
Don't think of them as gone away,
their journey's just begun,
life holds so many facets-
this earth is only one.

And think of them as living
in the hearts of those they touched...
for nothing loved is ever lost-
and they were loved so much.

E. Brennerman



Brian Nugent
SCOTT
1931 - 2009



Reginald James
PONTING
1936 - 2009



John Warwick
DOWNES
1940 - 2009



Vale Warrant Officer Class One

Reginald James Ponting

Reginald James (Jim) Ponting passed away on the 20th January 2009 after an eight week battle with cancer

Jim was born in Cooma 21st September 1936 to Bill and Dorothy Ponting and spent much of his early life at Cooma in the heart of the Majestic Snowy Mountains. Jim loved the High Country and the High Country moulded him into the big, rugged, kind hearted Warrant Officer who served with distinction in the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery for 20 years. It was not surprising that when he retired he chose to settle in Canberra, within sight of the Brindabella Ranges.

In the turbulent years of the forties with his father Bill on active service in the Middle East, Jim and his mum Dorothy moved into his grandparent's house in Cooma. Times were tough and his mother needed to search far and wide for work, often leaving Jim's upbringing to his beloved grandmother who was to have a profound influence on his moral values.

Having attended primary school in Cooma, Jim moved to Sydney after the war and was reunited with his mother and father but the war had taken its toll and soon after his parents separated and Jim was sent to the Blue Mountains Grammar School as a boarder for his secondary education. After completing his Leaving Certificate, Jim started work as a garage assistant in Sydney.

Jim enlisted in the Army on 15th April 1957, the same day as his life long friend Ian Hodgson. After recruit training they were allotted to RAA and trained at the School of Artillery as Air Defence Gunners.

Jim served with, 110 Light Anti Aircraft Battery, 111 Light Anti Aircraft Battery, Recruit Training Battalion Puckapunyal, 12 Field Regiment and Army Office, Canberra.

He saw operational service in Malaysia from 21st June 1966 to 16th January 1968 and South Vietnam from 23 February 1971 to 4 November 1971

On his return to Australia, Jim was posted to the Recruit Training Battalion in Puckapunyal where he was promoted to Warrant Officer Class 2 and took up a position as CSM. Jim's stature, toughness and professionalism again came to the fore, as he trained National Servicemen in preparation for a possible tour of duty in Vietnam.

One national serviceman from this time, Kevin Sheedy; the renowned Essendon player and coach, was quoted in a Bulletin article before the Anzac Day game in 2007 that the two men who had greatly influenced his life were AFL legend Tommy Hafey and the other an army warrant officer.

Sheedy said, "I met this bloke called Warrant Officer Ponting, He was in charge of basic training, I can remember thinking, gezz what sort of man is this ? I thought Tommy Hafey was tough, but Tommy wasn't in it compared to Jim."

In October 1970 Jim arrived in Townsville to join 12 Field Regiment for its 1971 Vietnam tour. He was a breath of fresh air arriving in HQ Battery only a few months before going overseas.

It is normally the Gun Battery of the Regiment who seem to be in the limelight, but Jim was determined that HQ Battery would be second to none. He supported his diggers 100% and would come out all guns blazing if he thought they were being unfairly treated.

Today I can smile in my grief, when I recall him taking his point to the very edge and storming out of the Regimental 2ICs conference because he believed his soldiers were getting a raw deal.

Jim retired from the Army on 16th April 1977 after 20 years service, during his time he was awarded. Commendation for Distinguished Service.- Australian Active service Medal with clasp Vietnam.- Vietnam Medal.- Australian Service Medal 1945 / 1975 with clasp SE Asia.- Defence Force Service Medal with First Clasp.- National Medal.- Australian Defence Medal.- Vietnam Campaign Medal.- Pingat Jasa Malaysia

Jim was delighted at the invitation to become an associate member of A Field Battery Association. It was Jim who arranged the Scattering of Ashes Ceremony of WO1 Ken Kennedy at Kennedy's Knoll at the Majura Field Firing Range in the ACT.

Jim's Funeral was held at the Anzac Memorial Chapel of St Paul at Duntroon on Friday 30th January 2009, where he and Cynthia were married 20 years before.

The Gunner family were well represented among the 400 strong congregation.

Stand Easy ! Big Jim

(With thanks to Bob McEvoy and Len Batten)



VALE - BRIAN NUGENT (Scottie) SCOTT. 1931 - 2009

I first met Scottie in 1949, we were both from Western Australia and he had joined the Army 6 months before me, we were friends but were to become good mates later on when we were posted to Western Command Workshops and later shared the same hut for 2 years in Malaya from 1957 until 1959.

We worked together and played together and during all these years from 1949 until my last visit, a week before his passing, we never ever had a cross word, although thousands of drinks together.

We have seen all of our children grow to become wonderful adults and Scottie and Val were there to help me cope with the loss of my beloved wife in 1999.

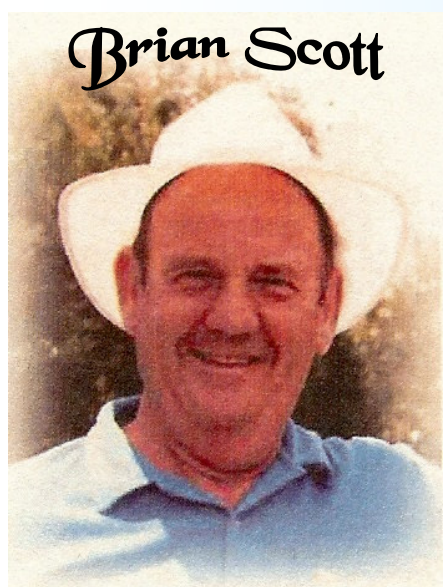
To his wife Val and family, Brian will always be remembered as a loving father, a wonderful grand-dad and a fantastic person; his quiet wisdom will be greatly missed.

To his friends and colleagues, their memory will always be of a dependable, honest and trustworthy man – just the sort of person you know you can rely on, if ever you need to.

This is his legacy; it is how we shall all remember Brian Scott in the years to come. The illness, he so bravely endured may have taken him from us – but it will never rob us of his memory.

This is a poem created by Brian's granddaughter Elly, that she read so eloquently at his funeral, it manifests more of this man's nature than any words from me.

Ron (Butch) Slaughter



THE BEST GRANPA IN THE WORLD

When I was just a baby
Growing in my mother's womb,
I knew how much I loved you
You'd see me very soon.

You travelled here from Perth
To see me in Mum's tummy.
You felt me kick and watched me
grow,
And thought it really funny.

Then out I came, my life began
With no less love than now.
You and Nanna came to stay,
Helped Mum and Dad, somehow.

You both went back to hometown
Perth,
To which you were to stay.
Until Mum and I came to visit you,
At six months and a day.

Fifteen months passed, another
born,
My sister Stacey May.
With that our bond was woven
tight,
Forever it would stay.

Back again to Perth you went
Although visiting more often.
We always knew, that as you grew,
All you'd do is soften.

When I was just a little girl
Around the age of three,
You came to visit, I asked you to
stay,
You said you'd have to see.

The next year came so quickly,
I was a girl of four
With princess crowns and fairy
gowns
I'd wave goodbye no more.

I jumped with joy, I sang, I danced
For you were here to stay.
Oh how happy we all were,
Just five minutes drive away.

Years went by, we saw you lots,
Our bond just getting stronger,
Because you were always so much
fun
We'd beg Mum to stay longer.

The jail game, that rings a bell,
Escaping from your grip.
Running away and hiding,
Trying not to trip.

"Gotcha!" You'd yell, as you looked
At nothing but empty space.
We had no clue that you always
knew
Our favourite hiding place.

Teasing us with fresh air cake
Did not make you a favourite,
Though you always made up with a
joke
And just how funny you made it.

So now I'm writing this for you,
No longer a little girl.
You had grown quite old and ill,
But you'll always be my world.

The journey's been a tough one,
And you hadn't been too well.
We all know something that will
never change –
And that's the jokes you tell.

Now you're up in heaven,
Looking down from up above.
We'll all miss you forever,
You've shown us so much love.

Brian Nugent Scott,
This poem I write for you.
Loving, caring grandfather,
Father, friend and husband too.

Elly Chalk



Vale John Warwick Downes 1940 - 2009

213822 Warrant Officer Class One John Downes, enlisted for National Service on 8th. January 1959, discharged on 30th. June 1960, after service in the CMF he re-enlisted on 5th January 1961, retired on 5th. January 1982 .

Overseas Service: Singapore, Oct. 1965 to Sept. 1967
Vietnam, May 1968 to May 1969.

Medals: Australian Active Service Medal 1945-75 with clasps Malaysia and Vietnam. Vietnam Medal. Defence Force Service Medal with 1st. Clasp. National Medal. Australian Defence Medal. Anniversary of National Service 1951-1972 Medal. Vietnam Campaign Medal.
Pinjat Jasa Malaysia.

This eulogy was delivered at John Downes' funeral
by his son

I would like to thank everyone attending today, to pay tribute to my Father; John Downes

My father had a full life over his 68 years, the centre of that life was my Mother- his wife Lyn.

It is important to recognise the love and care of my Mother, over my Father's last few years.

There can be no better example of a loving marriage than the tenderness of my Mother's care, and the fondness of my Father's affection.

It is in these times of trial that strength of character really shows through. It is that strength of my Father's character that I would now like to reflect on.

My Father would boast that he only had three employers; Sydney Railways, the Commonwealth Public Service and of course the Australian Army.

To me that is a life characterised by loyalty, dedication and discipline.

It is fair to say that my Father didn't have the opportunities that I did, through the sheer misfortune and untimely loss of his parents.

As I said to my Dad only a few days ago, everything that my sister and I have done is because he let us stand on his shoulders.

It's a credit that his hard work gave us the privileges that he never had.

As a child, I really didn't know the ins and outs of his work at the CES, but it filled me with pride, that Dad's job was finding jobs for others.

It was only later, while travelling through the Western Suburbs of Sydney that I recognised how important his work was in the hard times of the late 1980s and the early 1990s, and how much hope he would have given to others.

I didn't know much of my Father when he was in the Army, in fact, early on Dad really didn't speak of it as much as he should have and it is only in recent years that I have fully appreciated how important his military service was.

But, Dad, with just a little bit of pride, did say that he was the fastest promoted sergeant in his corps, he also added with a little dig that his corps, by driving everywhere, showed far more sense than mine which tended to walk.

Dad saw active service in Vietnam and an operational tour of Malaya, he finished his career as Regimental Sergeant Major; the senior and most respected rank in any Army unit.

My Father passed away with his immediate family, my sister Ann and my Mother close by, he was also supported by numerous family and friends during his last days.

In his few moments of distress, he knew that we were there for him, as he had been for all of us, without judgement.

My Father would also like us to recognise the heartfelt and immense support given to his family, especially in recent days.

My Father passed away with his faith rediscovered, may his life sustain our faith in his passing

Farewell Dad, we will always need and remember you.



Confrontation with Indonesia 1962-1966

The Indonesian Confrontation (or Konfrontasi in Indonesian) was an undeclared war fought from 1962 - 1966 through which President Sukarno of Indonesia tried to destroy the newly created nation of Malaysia.

Sukarno argued that the new nation was in fact just a way of maintaining British colonial influence in the area.

Indonesia had recently gained control of West Irian (formerly West New Guinea) from the Dutch, giving it a shared border with Australia in Australian-controlled Papua-New Guinea. Australia did not want any armed conflict with Indonesia on its border, but it also wanted a strong, united, anti-communist Malaysia.

But when Malaysia was created, Indonesia declared its opposition and hostility to it.

Indonesian President Sukarno was a militaristic, tough, nationalist, who was also trying to balance two great powers in his nation - the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI), and the Army. He hoped that his opposition to Malaysia would keep both of them together and in support of him.

During 1963 the Indonesians sent small parties of regular and irregular soldiers to wage terrorist and propaganda actions in the former British areas of Borneo (Sarawak and Sabah). In 1964 they stepped up their actions to include raids on the Malaysian peninsula.

The Australian government was reluctant to commit its troops to actions against Indonesian soldiers, but finally decided to do so when repeatedly asked by the Malaysian government.

The main focus of Australian attention was in the Malaysian areas of Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak). Fighting was in difficult terrain and in an oppressive jungle climate. The troops were sited along the border to protect population centres from enemy attacks. But they also made frequent though secret incursions into Indonesian territory, forcing the Indonesians to defend themselves rather than be an attacking force.

3 RAR had four major contacts with Indonesian forces and suffered two mine casualties in 1965. In 1966 they were replaced by 4 RAR, which had a quieter time. In addition, two SAS squadrons, artillery batteries, engineers and RAN ships were involved.

23 Australians were killed, seven of these on operations, and 108 wounded.

There was very little press coverage in Australia at the time, because of the sensitivity of the operations and the cross-border activities. The Australian troops were all sworn to secrecy about having entered Indonesian territory, and it was not until 1996 that the 'invasion' was publicly admitted.

In 1965 Indonesian army leaders staged a coup against Sukarno, and massacred thousands of PKI members. Once firmly in command, they stopped the policy of Konfrontasi, and recognised the new nation of Malaysia in 1966



Australian forces involved

Elements of the Royal Australian Engineers (RAE)

3rd and 4th battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) with tracker dogs and indigenous guides

Elements of the Special Air Services (SAS) Regiment - the newly formed elite reconnaissance/patrol force

Royal Australian Artillery support elements

693 Signal Troop (detached from 121 Signal Squadron, Singapore)

Royal Australian Navy (RAN): HMAS *Curlew*, *Gull*, *Hawk*, *Ibis*, *Snipe*, *Teal*, *Duchess*, *Vampire*, *Vendetta*, *Derwent*, *Parramatta*, *Yarra*

Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) elements

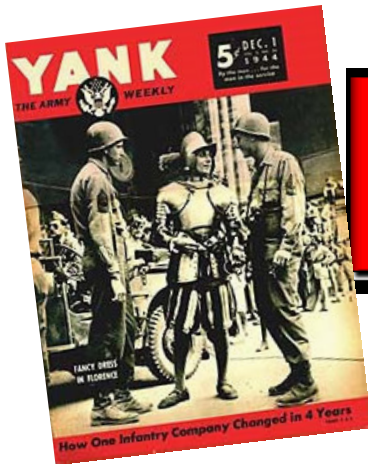
In this edition's Letters to the Editor, Phil Calvert mentions this paragraph below, from the History of the Battery that was published on page 11 in the October 08 newsletter:

“In 1965 the Battery again became a separate unit and in September of that year returned to Malaya, now the Federation of Malaysia, for active service in the Confrontation with Indonesia, as the campaign was known.

The Battery saw active service during this campaign both on the Malayan mainland and in Sabah in Borneo.”

Phil goes on to say that he would be interested in more information, regarding dates and locations.

The main article above is a brief description of the war. If any reader can supply further information please contact the editor



In May 27, 2001 — Hartzell Spence, the founder and

editor of YANK, died at the age of 93.

YANK, a weekly magazine written by and for ordinary soldiers, was a wonderful experiment in democratic (if highly restricted) journalism that was read each week by an estimated 2.2 million soldiers, sailors, and airmen.

Spence championed Sgt. George Baker, who had won an army cartooning contest, and published Baker's "Sad Sack" cartoons, with their colourful and realistic depiction of GI life.

Spence was also responsible for YANK's most popular feature — the sexy photos of Rita Hayworth, Betty Grable, Hedy Lamarr, and other Hollywood stars and starlets, usually attired in low-cut gowns, swimsuits, or lingerie, that graced each and every issue of the magazine.

One especially sexy pinup in 1945 featured the then unknown Norma Jeane Baker, long before she made her breakthrough in pictures as Marilyn Monroe.



In 1942 Marilyn married James Dougherty, an aircraft plant worker, at the age of 16. He joined the Merchant Marines and was sent to the South Pacific in 1944.

After Jimmy left, Norma Jeane took a job on the assembly line at the Radio Plane Munitions factory in Burbank, California. Several months later, photographer David Conover saw her while taking pictures of women contributing to the war effort for YANK magazine. He couldn't believe his luck.

She was a "photographer's dream." Conover used her for the shoot, on June 26, 1945, and she ended up on the cover of the August 2, 1945 issue! (see photo below).



Norma Jeane Baker on the cover of the 2 August 1945 issue of YANK.



In the summer of 1941, just a few months before Pearl Harbour was attacked, LIFE magazine ran a black-and-white photograph of an up-and-coming movie actress named **Rita Hayworth**.

In the photo, the redheaded beauty is kneeling on a bed made up with satin sheets.

Her silky nightgown is white, with black lace trimming the low-cut top. She's smiling slightly for photographer Bob Landry.

The snapshot would become one of the most popular pin-ups of World War II.



Not just any picture of Betty Grable, but *this* picture was probably the number one pinup of World War II.

This image was reproduced on the noses of hundreds of bombers, and tens of thousands of Airmen, sailors, GIs, and marines, far from home, listened to American songs broadcast by Tokyo Rose, and gazed wistfully at **Betty Grable's** million-dollar legs.

Jane Russell (the "Sweater Girl") was the product of pure publicity, supervised by her mentor, Howard Hughes.

Her appeal was cantered squarely on her sulking beauty, glowing sensuality and, oh yes, the ample bosom.

In 1941, Hughes cast her as the temptress in his "sex Western," *The Outlaw*, from which this was culled, destined to become one of the great WW II pinups.



From Phil Calvert

Dear Editor, In a recent issue of the A Field Battery Newsletter there was an article headed, Anzac Day 2008 Terendak Camp, Malacca, Malaysia, where reference was made to the grave of Peter Badcoe, (with whom I served in 1 Field Regiment in Holsworthy).

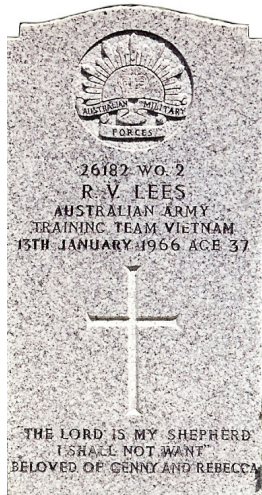
Beside his grave is that of WO. R.V. Lees; another gunner, see enclosed photo which I took about 10 years ago during a visit to the camp.

I regret that I can't provide anymore detail about WO2. Ronald Lees' service, the last contact I had was when he was one of my Bombardier Instructors at 13 NS Training Bn. At Ingleburn in 1959.

In the same newsletter the article on the history of A Field Battery refers to Active Service in Sabah, Borneo. I would be interested to know the dates of this service and also the location in Sabah where the Battery served.

Keep up the great work, I enjoy each edition of the newsletter

Regards, Phil Calvert.



**26182 Warrant Officer Class 2
Ronald Victor Lees
Dob 20 04 28
Dod 13 01 66**

Dear Editor,

I thought I would write a letter to your great publication to explain that not all your readers are intelligent and good looking as your average gunner.

Let me explain some of the things I have had to put up with. I tell you, I got no respect, even as a kid: we'd play hide-and-seek, and nobody would look for me.

I was an ugly kid, too. How ugly? I was so ugly my mother breast-fed me through a straw.

My mother had morning sickness after I was born

When I was born I was so ugly, the doctor slapped my mother.

I was such an ugly kid, when I played in the sandbox the cat kept covering me up.

When my old man wanted sex, my mother would show him a picture of me.

The time I was kidnapped, and the kidnappers sent my parents a note they said, "We want five thousand dollars or you'll see your kid again."

Once when I was lost I saw a policeman and asked him to help me find my parents. I said to him, "Do you think we'll ever find them?" He said, "I don't know kid. There are so many places they can hide."

I get no respect at all, even from my dog he keeps barking at the front door. He doesn't want to go out. He wants me to leave.

I saw my doctor last week, I told him, "Doctor, every day I wake up, I look in the mirror, I want to throw up. What's wrong with me?!" He said, "I don't know, but your eyesight is perfect."

So you see, I ain't real happy, but I am looking forward to having a few at the AGM in Sept. That will be me out on the veranda with Harry Cook, yeah he's back on the cigarettes, so nobody will want to sit with him either.

Regards from Rodney Dangerfield.



Raising a glass for fresh water

After having his Kinetico automatic water softener for the last 20 years Reg Clatworthy from Toogoolawah is happy to introduce his new Kinetico K5 Drinking Water Station with the Brisbane Valley community. Reg said if people on bore water installed one of these machines, they could have all the fresh water they ever wanted.

The water that comes out of his new water station is 99% pure and significantly reduces heavy metals, chemicals, minerals and unpleasant tastes and odours. Reg adds that this water station does not run on electricity, so you don't have to worry about running up your electricity bill.

This system has a reverse osmosis membrane, where the water is forced through a semi permeable membrane under pressure so it even cleans itself. Reg is more than happy to show anyone how his water systems work.

NUPTIALS INTERRUPTUS

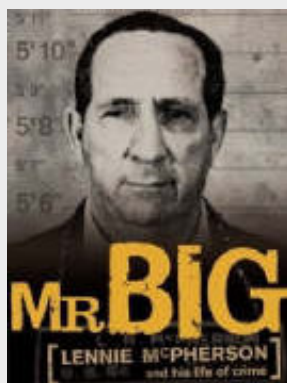
Lennie "Mr Big" Mc Pherson, married for the second time in July 1963, he was 42 and his bride Marlene Gilligan was 22 years old, and she was to learn that life with Lennie would never be normal.

It was during the wedding celebrations that Lennie was called away by an associate who whispered in his ear that a woman from Randwick had called, saying that Robert "Pretty Boy" Walker was just about to leave her house.

Lennie and his mate hurriedly left the wedding reception and jumped into a stolen 61 Holden and drove off to Randwick to park just down the road from the woman's house and waited for Robert Walker to emerge.

Robert "Pretty Boy" Walker was awaiting trial for attacking a man at the Macquarie Hotel in Woolloomooloo, known throughout the 60s and 70s as The Rockers or The Rock and Roll.

The problem was, the man that he attacked with an iron bar was a friend of Lennies known as Stan "The Man" Smith, a gunman and close associate of Lennie McPherson and now the driver of the stolen Holden.



As Robert Walker stepped out of the house and started to walk to the local shops, Lennie told Stan "The Man" to drive slowly toward him, while he pointed an Owen Sub Machinegun from the window.

When they got level with Walker, Lennie McPherson opened fire, the bullets ripping Pretty Boy apart as he collapsed; already dead, into a pool of blood.

They sped off and dumped the stolen car at nearby Kingsford where they had another vehicle planted and they hightailed it back to the wedding reception, they had been gone for just over half an hour.

Marlene smiled as they returned and welcomed her new husband back to her side as he apologised for the interruption to their celebrations.

Thus were played out the first hours of Lennie McPherson's second marriage, to Marlene Gilligan who bore him two sons, Danny and Craig.

Marlene listed her occupation as "Home Duties". She was no doubt aware of the importance of serving Lennie his dinner on time

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Kimbo, our Webmaster. Want to keep up with latest ? Log on to
 our website and you can read the latest and all the past newsletters

An amazing collection of photographs and news items covering the
 1940s to the present day with A Field Battery.

This website is addictive, with the news, links, notice board and
 a great selection of music while you browse away.

One of the best websites available and kept up to date by Kimbo.

You will want to put this address into your favourites

<http://afdbty.australianartilleryassociation.com>



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Hon. Sec. Clare Bassan
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Alan Singh is now in a high care home. If you would like to ring
 him his number is 07 3376 9297 this will take you direct to him.

Alan's address is: Sinnamom Village. 17 Mile Rocks Road
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